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Kent Hehr, MLA
Calgary-Buffalo Constituency

Honourable Thomas Lukaszuk
Minister of Enterprise and Advanced Education
408 Legislature Building
10800-97 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2B6

May 23, 2013

Dear Minister Lukaszuk,

Over the course of the last few weeks I have been contacted by many concerned students involved with the Licenced Practical Nursing Program at CDI College in Edmonton. Their current experience with the program has caused them to question whether they are receiving a reasonable education that will prepare them to adequately integrate into the workforce in their chosen field. In fact, several students felt it necessary to withdraw from CDI entirely. After reviewing their concerns, it appears to overlap with complaints stemming from other programs at CDI College of the same nature.

Since June 28, 2010, Bow Valley College has owned the licence of the LPN program taught at CDI College, and the first day of instruction for the program began on March 14, 2011. What makes this program appealing to prospective students is that CDI College offers the completion of the intense course load in a straight 73 week period. With a hefty tuition of \$29,979.50, students are required to complete both in-class study and hands-on practice through both nursing laboratory settings and practicum experience. It is the role of CDI College to adequately prepare their students to take the Canadian Practical Nurse Registration Exam which is absolutely necessary for gainful employment.

Enclosed you will find correspondence from several Practical Nursing Students at CDI College. As a bit of a summary some of the major issues raised include:

- CDI enrolled students, at the end of their education, did not meet the admission requirements as set out by the CLPNA.
- CDI failed to deliver textbooks, learning guides, and other academic resources in a timely manner to its students. Materials were delivered mid-way through the semesters.
- During those weeks of each semester in which required academic resources were not available, class members received no instruction in the curriculum content.
- As a result of a lack of academic resources available, students were distributed colouring books, encouraged to watch Netflix movies, paint anatomical structures on t-shirts, and participate in wheelchair races.
- By the time academic resources were provided by CDI, some of the resources were neither approved resources nor were in current use by Bow Valley College's own LPN Diploma Program.

- A majority of equipment needed for the program was not acquired nor provided until January 2013 – after an investigation by the BVC was commenced due to allegations that equipment for the program was not accessible to students.
- CDI persistently failed to hire instructors with qualifications as set out by the CLPNA and to continuously maintain an adequate staff to assist in the program. In addition, none of the instructors had any teaching experience. Some instructors were not qualified in the subject area.
- CDI did not maintain an appropriate system for evaluating students and awarding credentials as set out by the CLPNA.
- Students were not given the opportunity to perform skills required by the program. Instead, they only witness an instructor performing the skills.
- Instructors provided the class in advanced, examination questions and answers to which they would write.
- Students were threatened and intimidated after directing their complaints to the Program's Coordinator.

Although these allegations listed above are specific to the Licenced Practical Nursing Program there appears to be a history of similar complaints regarding CDI College programming dating back to at least 2007. These complaints include allegations of unqualified teachers, lack of resources, and an inability of students to perform skills in the workforce upon completion of their programs.

As I mentioned above, students pay a sum of \$29,979.50 in tuition fees for their education at CDI College, a significant amount for any institution in the province. Many students that attend must obtain an Alberta Student Loan in order to cover these costs however feel that they are not obtaining the skills or knowledge that will assist them in both their short-term or long-term career goals. My concerns with this are twofold; I question if this institution is providing a reasonable education to their students and whether funding these students to attend this for-profit institution is in the best use of taxpayer's dollars.

Given the current state of our publicly funded post secondary institutions incurring provincial cuts I would like to ask if it is wise to continue investing in students to attend CDI College given its educational history. Minister Lukaszuk, I understand that you are working very hard to accommodate the needs of Alberta's post secondary students but I am hopeful you can review these concerns through a Ministerial investigation in order to determine if CDI College, as a private vocational training institution, is best servicing the needs of Alberta's students.

I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Kent Hehr, MLA
Calgary Buffalo

Enclosure